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Letter dated 19 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement issued by the press service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nagorny Karabakh (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Movses **Abelian**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 19 October 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Statement issued by the press service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh

On 9 October 2000, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan issued a statement in which, in its characteristic manner, using vocabulary not normally associated with foreign policy departments, it makes belated and completely baseless accusations against the Karabakh side.

This time the cause of anxiety for Azerbaijan was a Memorandum on mutual cooperation signed by the Governments of the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh and the Republic of Armenia on 3 September 2000, and a draft law drawn up by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh and presented to Parliament on restoration of the historic names of the administrative districts of the Republic. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh regards such claims as gross interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh considers it fitting to recall that, even in the Soviet period, questions regarding the administrative and territorial division of the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh fell completely within the competence of the authorities of Nagorny Karabakh.

Now the immediate task of the Government of the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh is the liquidation of the hitherto insurmountable destructive consequences of the armed aggression by Azerbaijan against Nagorny Karabakh and the creation of conditions of normal life for the people. Determining the forms and methods of cooperation with the official and unofficial structures of a country is the prerogative of the executive authority effectively performing the functions of administration in its territory.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh draws the attention of the international community and interested forums to the fact that the actions of official Baku run counter to its stated readiness to establish peace and stability in the region. We are forced to describe the policy of Azerbaijan, aimed at disrupting the socio-economic development of the Republic of Nagorny Karabakh, as openly hostile.

What "favourable atmosphere for a settlement of the conflict" is Azerbaijan talking about, since for a long time now it has been disrupting the negotiation process, rejecting any peace initiatives and proposals for economic cooperation and thereby impeding confidence-building between the peoples involved in the conflict?

Regrettably, we have to note that it has become common practice for the authorities of Azerbaijan to engage in unsubstantiated criticism of mediating countries and international organizations. To take an example, what aims is official Baku pursuing when it deliberately hinders the work of the International Committee of the Red Cross and other mediating missions assisting the parties in solving

humanitarian problems such as looking for missing persons and freeing prisoners of war?

It is quite clear that this latest "ratcheting up" of a different level of officials in the Republic of Azerbaijan is due to the pre-election situation, to which the peace process is being sacrificed. It is this very fact which undermines confidence in Azerbaijan as a negotiating partner and is not conducive to a normalization of the situation in the region.